

[For information on the barber-doctor guild, see
categories 759 and 305. --Analyst]

565 laws or special judicial practices. Of this aspect of their activity we shall
 554 hear more at a later stage. But one point (already mentioned) must be
 693 stressed here. The office of *Liman* and *Alkali* could become hereditary; many judges and Mohammedan scholars are of Fulani stock; but this reflects only the political influence and partly also the tradition of learning in these families. As representatives of Mohammedan scholarship *Liman* and *Alkali* are only the most exalted exponents of a professional class which comprises men of every status and birth—the Mallams, 'learned men', who are held in high esteem by everyone. Even without rank or title, when of little and insignificant learning, they are placed above the ordinary commoner. They may marry the daughters and sisters of the high-born. The *Etsu* himself, descendant of a Mallam, puts a 'Mallam' before his name. Like his ancestors he honours and receives at his court all Mallams of reputation. They are a class between the classes, a mobile, privileged intelligentsia.

565 The description of the hierarchy of Nupe kingdom is incomplete
 554 without the mention of a last group of minor rank-holders, composed of
 467 the heads of the Bida craft-guilds. The guilds are closed occupational groups, the members of which live together in one locality and practise certain hereditary crafts such as glass-making, brasswork, weaving, &c.¹ The guild-heads receive their titles, together with the usual gift of a turban, from the *Etsu*. Though low down in the scale of ranks, they have yet an official standing, and are raised above the ordinary commoner and peasant. Their headship implies authority over all the members of their craft in town and village. Formerly the guild-heads received a small annual tribute of products of their craft from their fellow craftsmen. Like the members of the nobility, the titled guild-heads are summoned to the *Etsu's* Council at the *Sallah*, the great Mohammedan festival; and, like the privileged nobility, they are exempted from taxation. Their only tribute takes the form of an annual gift—an *emisa*, or 'salute'—again of products of their craft, the cost of which is borne jointly by the whole guild, and which is presented to the *Etsu* at the *Sallah*.

Certain craft-guilds are linked with the dynastic division of the capital and are divided into three sections each of which resides in a different *ekpā*. The groups of craftsmen also bear more special allegiance to the royal house in whose *ekpā* they live and with the ancestor of which they associate their coming to Bida and the foundation of their guild. But over and above this party allegiance guilds and guild-sections are closely linked with the ruling king of Nupe. For the king and the court represent the most important customers of the Bida craftsmen. All orders which the court intends to place are given through the guild-head, who guarantees their execution and acts as an official 'controller' of his group of craftsmen.

A position similar to that held by the guild-heads is also assigned to the head of the Bida brokers, the *Etsu Dilali*, who again plays the part of an agent of the king in all matters concerning commerce and trade in the capital.

¹ The organization of the Bida craft-guilds will be described in more detail in Chapter xiv.

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We shall see later that the explanation of this incorporation of artisans and brokers in the rigid bureaucracy of the kingdom lies in the control which the state exercises over crafts and merchandise; only by means of a control of this kind could the head of this warlike state secure an unimpeded supply of the commodities that were vital to the court and the state: arms, clothes, and saddles for the soldiers, food for the huge capital, and the luxuries that were needed for the display of royal power and wealth. We find convincing evidence for this interpretation in the fact that the different crafts are not of equal standing. Some rank higher than others, and this grading is not correlated with economic success: the very prosperous butchers are last on this list, blacksmiths and brassmiths, on the other hand, head the list, 'for they are makers of arms'. Only the glass-makers, a strongly independent and important craft, stand aloof from this order of craft-guilds. This is a list of the craft-guilds in Bida, with the titles of the guild-heads, arranged in order of precedence.

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The figure in brackets shows the number of *ekpā* in which they live. The titles of the guild-heads are given in italics.

Brassworkers (2): *Muku*.

Blacksmiths (3): *Dokodza*.

Carpenters and Builders (1): *Egbaba*.

Barber-Doctors (3): *Sokvara*.

Beadworkers (2): *Majī Lantana*.

Leatherworkers (scattered in the town): formerly *Majī Kimpa*.

Weavers (3): *Leshe, Majī, Ndakó*.

Butchers (3): *Sonfawa*.

Glass-makers (1): *Masagá*.

SLAVERY

The lowest in the complex order of social classes in Nupe are the slaves (*wufi*, as against *egí*, freeman, lit. child). But in this one class there are shades and distinctions of social status. Some slaves have risen to positions of wealth and influence. Others have remained menial workers in the households and on the farms of their masters. Pre-British Nupe numbered its slaves by the thousands. Twenty to thirty slaves was a moderate average for the household of a man of consequence. The prosperous craftsmen of Bida town, blacksmiths and weavers, always had slaves to work for them; even in villages one found households with one or two slaves.

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The people of Nupe obtained their slaves by two methods: first, there were the slaves captured in the war, who became the property of the man to whose share in the booty they had fallen; and second, there were slaves bought in the markets of Bida.¹ The majority of the latter, it seems, were slaves sold by their captors—noblemen who had taken more slaves than they needed for their household. Slaves were also sold abroad, mostly to the south. Many Nupe men of rank were engaged in

¹ Lander reports that 200 slaves were on sale in the market of Rabá, the then capital of Nupe (op. cit. iii, p. 313).

CHAPTER XIV
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ORGANIZATION OF CRAFT-GUILDS

IN the Western world Nupe native industries would fall under the heading of 'home industries'. They are carried out in the home, or in workshops connected with the home, and their labour organization is to a large extent composed of members of one household or a number of related households and families. All the industries are carried out by men. But we find a certain differentiation with regard to the organization of labour, between industries carried out in individual work and industries based on co-operative group production or, in other words, between individual crafts and guild-organized crafts. For the co-operative organization is of a specific type. It represents a closed group, the membership of which is to a large extent hereditary in a number of families; outsiders can join it only through a formal adoption into the profession, after a period of apprenticeship. The group, moreover, is defined not only with regard to the productive pursuit but also socially and politically, as a specific social group, almost an artisan class, which enjoys official recognition and certain political privileges. Its internal organization, finally, is marked by a certain hierarchy of grades and ranks. These crafts thus present a picture closely resembling the organization of craft-guilds in Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages.

Of the native industries in Nupe the following are organized in craft-guilds: blacksmith work and the mining of iron ore; the craft of brass- and silversmiths; glass-making; weaving; bead-work; building; wood-work and carpentry; and, lastly, the profession of butchers. Tailoring and embroidery, leatherwork, indigo dyeing, straw-hat-making, mat-making, and basketwork are practised as individual crafts. The majority of Nupe crafts, especially guild-organized crafts, are concentrated in the town. But even where these crafts occur both in town and village (as in blacksmith work and weaving), they appear in their most typical form only in Bida, and are indeed symptomatic of the civilization which evolved in the capital of the kingdom. I cannot attempt here to describe in full all these native industries, neither from the technological point of view nor with regard to the details of their organization. I shall deal only with the most typical and, sociologically, most significant crafts.

It will be best, however, before entering into the description of the various crafts, to anticipate certain general features common to all of them. I have called their productive organization 'co-operative group production'. But co-operation in these crafts exists in two different forms and on two different levels: we have, first, co-operation of the group at large, i.e. the guild or guild section; and, second, co-operation in the narrow sense, i.e. the actual working together, of the individual labour-unit. We shall leave the description of the former to the sections dealing with the various specific industries and concentrate here on the

467 latter, narrower, group co-operation. We shall see that it varies widely in scope and closeness, owing partly to the different nature of the productive technique and the varying demands upon co-operation which it entails, and partly also to extraneous factors, not involved in productive technique. The labour-unit in craft-work is called *efakó*, i.e. by the same name as the labour-unit in farm-work, to which, in fact, it corresponds in all essentials. Again we find a section of the family group working together under a senior relative who, as the common head, directs group co-operation, supplies the means of production (tools and raw material), and disposes of the proceeds from the group work. He also undertakes the other *efakó* obligations of paying tax for his co-workers, providing them with food, clothing, and bride-price. At the death of the *efakó* head the group member next in seniority takes his place. If old age disables the *efakó* head for active work he can retire from the labour-unit without giving up his position as the head of the group, i.e. without abandoning his control over the group income. Old men who have not reached the position of an *efakó* head when they are forced to retire will be supported by the labour-unit. The old men of the group are, moreover, often allotted a little farm-work close to the house, which 888 allows them to make their contribution, even in old age, to the group income. We can see already that the ability of the group to 'pension off' their old men and late leaders depends essentially on the size of the labour-unit; a very small labour-unit is clearly incapable of making the necessary provisions, and we shall find that in the case of these labour-units the support of the old men is undertaken, rather irregularly in fact, by their family as a family obligation, and no longer forms part of the regular services of the labour-unit towards its members or ex-members.

467 With regard to the junior *efakó* members we find, again, the practice of releasing from the *efakó*-unit adult workers who desire to make themselves independent and to set up a separate labour-unit. The question always entailed in the release from the labour-unit, namely, of the acquisition of new means of production, is complicated in craft-work by the fact that here the means of production are to some extent immovable (e.g. the blacksmith's furnace and anvil, the glass-maker's furnace, the weaver's loom, &c.). It appears to be due to this difficulty that the release from the labour-unit in craft-work does not invariably involve withdrawal also from the workshop in which these means of production are fixed, but that, on the contrary, there is the tendency to stay on and share workshops, furnaces, and so forth, with the ex-fellow-workers. Only if the workshop is overcrowded will the worker or workers who are leaving the *efakó*-unit look round for another place, for example, a vacant furnace in another workshop, or the entrance hut of a compound, or (more rarely) build themselves a new workshop, with the assistance of family and fellow craftmen. The withdrawing workers will be allowed to take with them the (movable) tools which they had been using, and will also be supplied as a rule, by the old *efakó* head, with raw material for the start. This setting-up of independent workers is in craft-work as in farm-work the last act of the functioning *efakó*.

The co-operative organization of *efakó* work also enables the group to

The cooperative organization of *efakó* work also enables
the group to INDUSTRIES

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train its adolescents and to bring them gradually into the system of co-operation. Young boys are employed first in easy auxiliary work, such as working the bellows in blacksmith and glass-work, or the spooling of cotton thread in weaving; sitting all day long in the workshop they learn a good deal from watching; when they are old enough they are given more serious work, which they carry out under the guidance and tuition of the *efakó* head till, eventually, they become fully fledged members of the labour-unit. In most cases the *efakó* work is supplemented by special individual, *buccá*, work. The relation between the two varies widely, with the specific nature of the craft and its productive technique.

BLACKSMITH WORK

The blacksmiths are called *tswata* in Nupe, or sometimes *tswata gbagba*, 'heavy smiths', to distinguish them from the *tswata muku*, the brass- and silversmiths. Nearly every village in Nupe possesses at least one or two blacksmith workshops. In Bida we find three groups of blacksmiths, whole blacksmith 'wards' in fact, each with its cluster of workshops, and each situated in a different *ekpá* of the town. According to tradition the three blacksmith groups are of different origin. One, in the old centre of Bida, *ba nín*, claims descent from the original group of blacksmiths which was established in Bida when it was still a Beni village. At that time the head of this group, the *Maji Tswata*, the Master of the Blacksmiths, is said to have held authority over all the blacksmiths of Beni country. The blacksmiths living in the *Etsu* Masaba quarter, the smallest of the three groups, came to Bida comparatively late, from Trans-Kaduna. The largest blacksmith group in Bida, in the *Etsu* Umaru quarter, traces its descent to the blacksmiths of Rabá, the former capital of the kingdom. They came to Bida together with the king and court when Bida became the new capital of Fulani Nupe. As we shall see later, this last group has established itself as the supreme guild authority over the blacksmiths of Bida and all Nupe. The craftsmen of this group call themselves *dokodzafí*, after their head, who bears the title *Dokodza*.¹

Technology

The blacksmith wards of Bida are of very different size; the smallest contains two workshops, the largest seven. In some cases the entrance-hall of the compound in which the families of the craftsmen are living serves also as workshop or forge. But usually the forge is in a separate hut which stands by itself a small distance from the compound; with its three or four wide doors, and the many small window-holes let into the wall to serve as passage for the smoke from the forge, the workshops can be easily identified. Inside are two furnaces, each screened in by an angular mud wall, about 3 feet high. On the inner side of the screen, facing the open fire, sits the blacksmith himself; on the other side of the

¹ It is interesting to note that the modern Emirate of Patigi, where the descendants of the old Nupe dynasty are reigning to-day, also possesses its group of 'royal blacksmiths', under another *Dokodza*. They came to Patigi together with the family of the present rulers, from Gbara, the ancient residence of this branch of the Nupe dynasty.

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placed, with charcoal piled over it. The 'cave' (e) is connected, by means of a narrow airshaft, with the mouth of the chimney (b). Cave and square pit are separated by a semi-circular clay plate (f), 1½ feet high, which is cemented into the opening so that it leaves only a small triangular hole open at the bottom. Through this hole the slag pours into the pit. One worker sits on a crude wooden bench which is supported by a timber structure (g), behind the bellows; he is relieved every hour. Other workers, two or three in number, act as stokers, feed the furnace with fuel and iron ore, and remove the slag by means of a long wooden stick with iron points, so that the small hole in the clay plate should be kept open. The iron ore is broken into small pieces by means of stones or hammers before it is placed in the furnace. The smelted ore remains behind the clay plate until the whole process is finished; then the clay plate is broken and the iron removed. The clay plate has to be made new and fixed in position every time the furnace is put to use. With the furnace all prepared, a lump of iron of the size of a large yam fruit can be produced in five to six hours' work.

We have already seen that the organization of blacksmith work and iron-ore mining (as of all guild-organized craft-work) involves two different types of co-operation, the actual working together of the labour or *efakó*-unit, and the wider co-operation in the framework of the occupational unit, the guild itself. We will examine first the composition of the labour-unit.

The men whom we find working in the same workshop are all related and belong to the same family group or section of the family group. The common workshop does not, however, invariably establish the labour-unit; the workshop group is the wider unit, for the men who occupy the same workshop are not necessarily also co-workers in the narrow sense. The labour-unit itself corresponds to the small individual family or section of the family—a father and his sons, or a number of brothers, who divide all work among themselves and in certain respects share the proceeds. All more important work is regarded as *efakó* work, i.e. the family head buys the raw material and receives the proceeds from the work carried out by his group. Less important work, mainly small repairs of hoes or axes, is regarded as *bucá*, and the money received for it belongs to the individual worker. Only adults, however, practise *bucá* work; small boys who are yet too young to carry out serious blacksmith work are assigned the work of blowing the bellows. In workshops where there are no young boys, the adult workers may take the bellows in turn; occasionally a woman, the wife of one of the blacksmiths, may help out.

The relation between these various units, workshop group, family group, and *efakó* group, is involved and variable. It will be best to illustrate it with actual examples. The first two are taken from the largest blacksmith group in Bida, the *Dokodza* people. In one of their workshops we find two adults and two boys working together—the boys blowing the bellows. They all belong to the same family and live in the same house. The two adults are brothers, and the two boys the sons of the elder brother. The four workers form a single labour-unit, under

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326 in the dry season will sell for 1s. 4d. in the rains. In these two busiest
 434 months of the year, then, the profits of the blacksmiths may be as much
 435 as 7d. on every hoe, or over 1s. a day (one man can produce two hoes a
 326 day). The blacksmiths of the *Dokodza* group in Bida seem very satisfied
 434 with their economic situation. But the blacksmiths in the country, and
 477 also the blacksmiths of the other, smaller, guild sections in Bida, are
 178 bitterly complaining of the decline of native blacksmith trade. Some of
 these country blacksmiths have turned farmers, or have at least taken up
 farming on a larger scale than formerly, in order to balance the losses of
 their industry. This retrograde movement is due to a variety of causes.
 One which has affected all blacksmith groups in the country equally, is
 the competition of European trade. Thus the Nupe blacksmiths have
 lost almost their entire trade in bush-knives to the European trading-
 stores; nor does the once very extensive trade in Bida hoes which the
 Hausa caravans used to take north exist any more. The iron smelters
 have suffered most severely under this competition. As we have seen,
 their work has been almost completely disorganized under the pressure
 of European competition. Other causes affect the blacksmiths in the
 country more than in the town, and smaller groups more than larger.
 [437] The scarcity of money among the peasants has forced certain farmers in
 Kutigi, for example, who were unable to pay in money for the hoes
 which they needed, to offer a half-day's work on the farms of the black-
 smiths in lieu of payment.¹ Closer intercourse and the increased facili-
 ties of transport between town and country have also deflected some of
 the former custom of the village blacksmiths to Bida, where, owing to
 the presence of the European trading-stores, there is less danger of a
 shortage of raw iron occurring in the busiest time of the year. A final,
 more subtle, cause of the decline in blacksmith trade, which attacks
 smaller groups more severely than larger, lies in the failure of the
 former to meet successfully the demands of what we have called 'main-
 tenance of labour'. This influence will become clear when we examine
 the second aspect of co-operation in native industries, namely, the co-
 operative organization of the professional group at large.

Guild Organization

326 The term 'guild' is applied correctly only to the Bida blacksmiths,
 467 whose organization shows the characteristic features of the guild system
 —the closed profession, centralized control, the hierarchy of ranks and
 grades. However, the individual blacksmith groups in Nupe, in Bida as
 well as in the villages, are all modelled on very similar lines—although
 the guild sections in Bida are organized on a larger scale, and also more
 closely and efficiently. Moreover, the control of the Bida guild system
 extends in certain respects over the whole country and the various inde-
 pendent local blacksmith groups. This widest professional unit is the
 result of political rather than economic factors; it is expressed mainly in

¹ Prices in the country are higher than in Bida. In Kutigi a heavy hoe is sold for 1s. to 1s. 6d. The difference in price seems chiefly due to the fact that the Kutigi blacksmiths must obtain their iron through middlemen who bring it from Bida, as there is no European store in the village.

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467 the allegiance to a common head, the master of the *Dokodza* section in Bida. As this group of Bida blacksmiths is associated, historically, with Nupe kingship its head also holds his rank and position by appointment of the king of Nupe. The *Dokodza* claims that the blacksmiths in the whole of Nupe 'must obey him' in all matters concerning the profession. As an external expression of this allegiance he receives annually, at the occasion of the Great *Sallah*, a gift of crude iron ore from the various blacksmith groups of the country. Although this gift has now been abandoned the village blacksmiths still acknowledge (at least in theory) the supreme position of the guild-head in the capital, and never fail to pay their respects to him when they are in Bida. In return they count on his help and influence if they are in need of official intervention in the capital or at the court. The closeness of the co-operation under the guild-head, and the efficiency of his control over his fellow craftsmen, increases with the nearness to Bida, till, in the town, it takes the form of guild organization in the strict sense of the word.

The most effective unit, however, is not the guild at large, but the single guild section. The people of each group are of one *dengi*, one kinship group, related both by descent and frequent intermarriage. Every male born into the group is expected to become a blacksmith—'how can he become anything else', said my informants; 'we know no other job'. But, on the other hand, they would maintain that no man from outside could become a blacksmith. When I asked the *Dokodza* people why this should be so, they answered with a laugh: 'How can anyone who was not born a blacksmith become one?' Nevertheless, in another part of the town I discovered a man who, born of a family of traders, had adopted the profession of a blacksmith. He seemed to have been a rather more unruly youth than the rest of the family; for he had firmly declined to become a trader, like them; he had first studied the Koran and thought of becoming a Mallam, but later changed his mind, and decided to become a blacksmith: he 'liked it better' than either trading or studying. Certain maternal relations of his were Beni blacksmiths in a village near Bida. There he went, stayed with them for some years till he had learned the trade, and then returned to Bida, where he is now keeping a little workshop of his own in the entrance hut of the house of his paternal relations. Among the Beni blacksmiths in Bida I was told that formerly apprentices were taken regularly. The pupils came mostly from villages near Bida, and returned to their home as fully fledged craftsmen. The training took from three to five years, during which time the apprentice lived in the house of his master. No money was taken for the tuition, but after the completion of the apprenticeship the parents of the pupil sent a present of food and kola-nuts. Adoption into the profession went hand in hand with adoption into the guild, and the new craftsman would regard himself as a member of the guild section in which he was apprenticed. However, there have been no adoptions into the craft for many years now.

Each guild section has its own titled head and, besides, one or two other ranks which are bestowed on the family heads of the other large family groups in the section. The position of the head of the guild

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section is taken in rotation by these families, the 'second-in-command' succeeding to the position of the head at his death. Among the *Dokodza* people we find a threefold elaborate hierarchy which settles the succession even to the rank of the 'second-in-command': *Dokodza*, *Dokpa*, and *Shaba Dokpa* (lit. Successor of *Dokpa*). The smaller blacksmith section of the Bida Beni possesses two ranks: *Maji Trwata* and *Shaba Trwata*. The blacksmith groups in the villages, and also the groups of iron-ore miners, have similar rank systems.¹ The heads of the blacksmith groups, and to a lesser extent the other guild ranks, are respected, and their orders are obeyed by all co-workers. The main significance of their position lies in the fact that it is their task to organize all co-operative work within the group.

Co-operation and mutual assistance within the section takes many different forms. If the people of one workshop, for example, are unable to fulfil a certain order, they pass it on to another workshop; or if the occupants happen to be absent when a customer calls, their neighbours will always be ready to take the order on their behalf. When the workshops ran short of iron ore, the guild-head used to send messengers to the iron-ore miners to bring back a sufficient supply for the whole group; this form of co-operation, however, no longer exists, and to-day each workshop procures its own raw material. Co-operation of a more far-reaching order is concerned with the various tasks which we have placed under the heading of 'maintenance of labour'. We have already seen that these tasks involve co-operation and mutual assistance on a scale which transcends in varying degree the *efakó*-unit. Thus the division of labour in the preparation of charcoal implies co-operation of the whole workshop group. When it becomes necessary to forge and put up a new anvil an even larger group must co-operate in active work. We may add that the upkeep of the workshop itself, or the building of furnaces—especially the large furnaces used by the iron-ore miners—demands a co-operation much larger than that which the *efakó* group can provide. In none of these cases is the co-operation recompensed with a share in the profits (as is the case in *efakó* co-operation); nor is this co-operation organized on the basis of collective work of the *egbe* type; nor can it be explained, finally, by the fact that the co-workers may belong to the same family and household. Rather is it a co-operation based on membership of the same professional union—the guild or guild section—and mobilized by the appointed head of the group.

The head of the guild section is also responsible for maintenance of labour in a wider sense. His professional advice may be sought by all workers in the group if they have some difficult or unusual work in hand. He will also occasionally lend his people money if they need it for professional purposes (e.g. the purchase of crude iron ore), in other words, he provides them with the necessary working capital. Certain similar services towards the group are vested in the position of the *Dokodza* alone, that is, of the head of the guild at large. He arbitrates in all internal disputes among the blacksmiths of Bida, and is thus able to

¹ See chart of Village Ranks, p. 57.

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467 prevent friction in his body of workers. He is also the agency through which important large orders reach the group. On a smaller scale this task also falls to the heads of the other blacksmith groups. But in the case of the guild-head it gains special significance; for these 'royal blacksmiths' worked for the largest customer of the country, the Nupe court. They could be certain of a constant large demand, e.g. for tools for the farm-hands working for the king, or various iron implements needed in the royal household, for horse bits and stirrups for the king's horses, or flint-locks for the guns of the bodyguard. These orders are given by the king or court officials to the *Dokodza*, who then distributes the work among the craftsmen of his group according to their capacity and skill, or, if the order proves too large, among the workers in other guild sections as well. The *Dokodza* also receives the payment for this work, and keeps the largest share; the rest of the money is divided equally among the whole guild section, whether they have been working on this particular job or not.¹ These royal orders have been greatly reduced recently, not only because many of the implements needed are obtained nowadays from the European stores, but also because many of the requirements of the royal household are now catered for by the Public Works Department in Bida. But when the present *Etsu* built his new house, in 1935, he ordered nails and brackets for all doors from the *Dokodza* people.

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178 The part played by the guild-head (and to a lesser extent by the sectional heads) in providing labour and capital for his group explains the authority which he exercises over his fellow workers, and also his ability to act in certain circumstances as their 'financier'. On the other hand, the close co-operative organization of the guild section reveals itself as a device to meet these regular demands upon the production of the group. Here we can attempt to explain why the smaller guild sections in Bida (and similarly the village groups of blacksmiths) have suffered more severely under modern economic changes than did the *Dokodza* group. The size of the groups is itself significant. Only the privileged group of the 'royal blacksmiths' evolved a large-scale professional organization; the other groups, which did not have the same access to constant large-scale demands upon production, remained small, and more loosely organized. Now, we can assume that these smaller groups also obtained formerly a sufficient demand for their products from various sources. It may also be that their sources have failed sooner, and more completely, than the source with which the *Dokodza* people could reckon—the continued orders from the royal household are evidence of this. But these unequal changes are less significant in their direct effect upon production (which may be negligible)² than in their indirect effect,

¹ How, on the other hand, the authority of the guild-head can be adapted to new situations is illustrated in the following instance. When I went to inspect the furnaces of the iron-ore miners near Bida, I had to obtain a guide through the *Dokodza*. On our return to Bida the guide at once showed the money which I had paid him to the guild-head; though he was allowed to keep it he could not have done so without first informing the guild-head, who could have deducted a part of the money.

² The order for nails and brackets for the royal house which we mentioned above brought in only 2s. and a gift of food.

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through the medium of labour organization. The royal orders, though at present small and irregular, still mobilize the group organization of the *Dokodza* people in the traditional way. The general weakening of the guild organization brought about by recent economic and political changes, which is clearly visible in the decline of the authority of guild-head and sectional heads, has thus affected the largest and strongest group less than the smaller, and already weaker, guild sections. In their case the group organization has, in fact, been reduced beyond the margin of safety. We have seen that Nupe blacksmith work demands comparatively large group co-operation for a successful maintenance of labour (in all its aspects). In a weakened organization, a markedly reduced co-operative group, maintenance of labour becomes increasingly difficult. This is what happened in the case of the smaller blacksmith groups. And this difficulty, while not sufficient in itself to disrupt the labour organization, would yet weaken its resistance to the effects of economic change—a decline in trade, the competition of European goods—effects which (at least for the time being) have passed by the larger and more strongly organized section.

We can quote several instances of this: the division of labour which enables a workshop, say, of four men, to continue work while two of the men prepare charcoal is impossible in a small working unit, and a valuable working day, possibly in the busiest time of the year, must be sacrificed. Or a workshop may have to interrupt its work when iron ore runs out and new raw material has to be fetched from the iron-ore miners—a task which, in large-scale co-operation, can be performed by one man for a number of workshops without deranging the work of the group. I have even witnessed cases in which work had been interrupted, or reduced to small repairs, because the workers had no money to buy raw materials; in a large co-operative group money would have been found more easily, especially with the help of the guild-head. In Kutigi I saw one of the two local blacksmith workshops left dilapidated for a whole year because the workers could not muster sufficient labour. The most conspicuous example of all is that of the iron-ore miners who had let their means of production, their furnaces, fall into disuse.

BRASS- AND SILVERSMITHS

The Nupe brass-smiths—*tsuata muku*—reside almost exclusively in Bida. The only place outside Bida where brass-smiths have settled is Kacha, the rich trading-place, where these craftsmen from Bida hoped to find a profitable market. There are two groups of brass-smiths in Bida, one in the quarter of *Etsu* Masaba and one in the *Etsu* Usman quarter. The latter has lost its former importance. In technical skill both groups are equal, as I could test for myself; as regards work and design of the traditional type the group in the *Etsu* Usman quarter seems the more efficient. Yet its decline, unmerited though it was, is not difficult to understand. It was partly due to political factors. The group in the *Etsu* Usman quarter flourished during the régime of *Etsu* Bello, who was of the dynasty associated with this part of the town, and also under *Etsu*

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435 day is thus 6d. The little brass animals, four of which can be done in from one to two days, are sold for 2s. to 3s. apiece; the material comes to only 8d. The highest profits are thus made on work that demands special skill, taste, or invention, such as the silver bangles or the brass figures.

326 Among the brass-workers as among the blacksmiths three or four men, often close relations, share the same workshop. But it happens not infrequently that people who are not relations work together in the same workshop, or that close relations work in different workshops. These are typical examples:

1. In this workshop three old men are working together, two of whom are brothers, and the third a distant relation who lives in a different household.
2. Here we find two distant (maternal) relations, who live in different houses, sharing the same workshop together with a young boy who is the pupil of one of the men.
3. This workshop is next door to 2. In it are working the two brothers of one of the men in workshop 2 together with another man, a distant relation, and a young pupil.
4. This is the largest brass-smith workshop in Bida. It belongs to the head of the guild section, and is shared by the guild-head himself, who, however, does not work there regularly, his two married sons, a married younger brother, and a stranger.

The labour-unit is much smaller than the workshop group, and also smaller than the labour-unit among the blacksmiths. Grown-up or married sons or brothers invariably work on their own, so that the working-unit consists as a rule only of a man and a boy, or frequently of one man only. Thus workshop 1 numbers three one-man labour-units, workshop 2 two labour-units consisting of one man and of one man and his pupil, respectively. In workshop 3 we have three labour-units, two consisting of one man and one of a man and a boy, and in workshop 4 five one-man labour-units. In these small labour-units the difference between *efakó* and *bucá* work must naturally disappear. The explanation for the smallness of the groups lies in the very nature of brass-smith work. It requires much less actual co-operation than the heavy work of the blacksmiths—in most cases, for example, the brass-smith blows the bellows himself. Brass-smith work, with its delicate technique and the large variety of objects which it produces, is also more highly specialized. Certain objects, such as bangles and ladles, are produced by all brass-smiths; but workshop 1 specializes in addition in sword-hilts and daggers; in workshop 2 one of the men produces the brass figures of which I have spoken; the men in workshop 3 are experts in the repair of sewing-machines, and so forth. A craft, finally, which follows fashion so closely and is always on the look-out for new attractive things must foster individual skill and inventiveness rather than collective enterprise.

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467 The guild organization at large also differs in certain essentials from that of the blacksmiths. The training of apprentices plays a much greater part in this prosperous and up-to-date industry. The training is longer and may take up to ten years. After the completion of the period

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of training the new member of the profession joins one of the work-shops in the quarter, while continuing to live in the house of his family. Large-scale co-operation is also of much less significance, since the furnaces are simple and easy to build, since no heavy anvils are used, and the forges mostly situated in the entrance hut of the house. The varied enterprises, and the spirit of 'individualism', render the advice or practical help of the guild-head less important. His organizing influence, however, is still an important factor. When, for example, the Bida brass-smiths first began to produce goods for Europeans, the guild-head took it upon himself to propagate this new profitable enterprise, and at the same time to assist the craftsmen in perfecting their technique. A District Officer who was a keen supporter of native arts and crafts had explained to him the kind of things that Europeans would buy—trays, ash-trays, finger-bowls, and suchlike. The guild-head himself led the way in the new production, and devised a system of guidance for his fellow workers. You can still see scratched into the mud wall of the guild-master's workshop circles, ovals, and squares of different size, which are the outlines of the objects the craftsmen were going to produce; they served as standard measures, and are indeed called by the Nupe *ema*, measure.

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There are two ranks in the brass-smith guild, each presiding over one section: the guild-master, called *Muku*, and the 'Successor of the *Muku*', the *Shaba Muku*. They are the heads of the two large family groups which are said to have been the earliest representatives of the craft in Nupe and to which most of the brass-smith families trace (at least in theory) their descent. The two ranks are taken in turn by the two family groups. The present guild-master, a very old man, is living in the brass-smith group in the *Etsu Usman* quarter; the *Shaba Muku* is at the head of the more prosperous section in the *Masaba* quarter. With the growing prosperity of this guild section the authority and influence of the old guild-master have declined, and to-day the *Shaba Muku* is the more influential person. Even the most successful and most 'individualistic' young brass-smiths who have created their own special style treat the head of their guild section with the respect due to his position and experience.

Here, as in blacksmith work, the most important service which the guild-master renders his fellow workers is that of acting as an intermediary between the craftsmen and the court. Here, too, the king of Nupe places all his orders through the *Muku*, who then distributes them among the different workshops. The large orders of former days, for arms, sumptuous horse-trappings, ornaments of many kinds, have disappeared. The costly ornamented bowls, used formerly in every Nupe household of consequence as drinking-vessels or receptacles for food and kola-nuts, have been replaced by enamelled teapots of European or Japanese manufacture. But on a limited scale the court is still the most important customer of the Bida brass-smiths. To recall themselves to the king and to solicit his custom the brass-smiths make him an annual gift of products of their craft which is presented to him at the occasion of the Great *Sallah*. The present which the brass-smiths presented to the new *Etsu* at the first *Sallah* celebrated under his reign was, not unnaturally,

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326 especially costly. It was in form of a brass tray for kola-nuts which
 467 had been made in the workshop of the *Muku* himself and to the cost of
 431 which (6s.) every brass-worker had contributed his penny or halfpenny.
 The *Etsu* accepted the gift with thanks and sent a return gift of a large
 bowl of kola-nuts (worth 10s.), which was distributed among all the
 brass-smiths of the town. If here the organizing influence of the guild-
 master becomes again visible, the 'individualistic' element is present
 also. For, in addition to the collective gift, individual workers are free to
 send their own personal gifts and to attract the attention of the court to
 their own particular style and skill. Thus one of the Bida brass-smiths
 presented the *Etsu* at the Sallah with a covered brass bowl, worth 3s. He
 was rewarded shortly afterwards, when the *Etsu* placed an order for new
 horse-bits, in European style, with him.

GLASS-WORKERS

323 The glass-worker guild represents the most strongly organized and
 467 most conspicuously self-contained of the Nupe craft-guilds. In the
 173 whole of Nupe there exists only one group of glass-workers, the *masagá*,
 who live in Bida, in a separate quarter of the town which is named after
 them *masagá fu, efu* (quarter) of the glass-workers. They regard them-
 selves almost as a distinct tribal group. They have a tradition that they
 came originally from Egypt, and brought their art with them from the
 old home. Their tradition has also preserved the names of the various
 towns and countries through which they passed on their long journey
 which took them, eventually, to Gbara, the ancient capital of Nupe
 kingdom.¹ They had stopped at none of these many towns and villages
 as they could not find there the kind of earth necessary for the making of
 glass. They settled then in Gbara, where, as their tradition has it, they
 arrived at the time of Taoede. Later, when the kings of Nupe moved
 their residence to other places, the glass-workers followed the court, to
 Jima, Lade, Rabá, and, finally, Bida.

323 The *masagá* obtain their raw material both by making their own glass
 438 and smelting down bottles of European manufacture. The latter kind of
 raw material, easy to obtain, and more attractive because of the variety
 of colours which it offers, has to a large extent replaced the original
 native-made glass.² Bida women, wives of the *masagá* as well as women
 from outside, regularly scour the town for empty bottles from European
 stores, households, offices, and dispensaries (where they can obtain the
 highly appreciated amber-coloured medicine bottles). Bottles of various
 kinds from other parts of Nigeria also find their way to the *masagá*
 quarter, bought up locally and transported to Bida, partly by railway, by
 the enterprising women traders.

323 The *masagá* nevertheless still produce their own glass as well. A

¹ My informants mentioned the following towns and countries: the 'land of the Arabs', the 'land of Bornu', Kano, and Zozo (Zaria).

² The actual cost of production is lower in the case of native-made glass. But this fact is balanced by the time-saving made possible by the use of bottle glass and also by the greater demand for coloured glass-ware.

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471 which, in the interest of efficiency, has evolved centralized control of labour
592 and means of production on a comparatively large scale, comes closer than
474 any other Nupe craft to the principle of the modern factory system.

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We have already seen that in the group at large, i.e. in the glass-workers' guild, a similar intensive co-operation obtains. Its organization falls to the guild-head, who assigns the different tasks to the various workshops and is responsible for the general planning of production. This planning must take into account the varying conditions of the market, and we find, in fact, that the guild-head, without interfering with the commercial transactions of the individual workshop, regularly consults traders and middlemen who visit the *masagá* quarter, and maps out accordingly the scheme of work for his community. On my many visits to the *masagá* I found that the guild-head could always tell me what kind of work was carried out in the various workshops, or when a particular workshop would start on a new task. The guild-head, who styles himself *Masagá*, has his own workshop, where his sons and brothers are working. He does not often work there himself, but certain difficult tasks, such as the making of very big, heavy bangles, which fetch the highest price, he alone can perform. The guild-head assists his co-workers with advice and practical help, also with small loans of money for the purchase of raw material or fuel; he arbitrates in internal quarrels, and he is, like all Nupe guild-heads, the accredited representative of his guild at the Nupe court.

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The ever-expanding business of the Bida glass industry involves an almost permanent need of new labour. Formerly the glass-workers bought slaves and trained them in the craft in order to enlarge their machinery of production. To-day they are regularly accepting apprentices. In 1936 five young men were being trained as glass-workers. An apprentice applies to the guild-head, who will then place him in charge of a certain workshop. The training is calculated to take three years, during which time the apprentices continue to live in their own homes and come to the *masagá* quarter only to work. But when their apprenticeship is completed they not only move into the *masagá* quarter, but are expected to marry *masagá* women (as did also the slaves in former days).

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This adoption into the kinship group is considered essential and is as much a qualification for the practice of the craft as is the technical training itself. Thus the monopoly of the glass-workers is kept intact, and no new branches can be established outside their organization. Kinship interests and kinship co-operation are enlisted in the service of professional co-operation and solidarity and in maintaining the continuity of a highly specialized, monopolized and almost secret, technique of production. Economic interests, in turn, are seen to be sufficiently powerful to effect a radical adjustment in the kinship structure, and to create, in a patrilineal society, a matrilineal enclave.

WEAVERS

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The weavers, called *edeluciži*, present another instance of the tripartite organization of Bida crafts. Each of the three *ehpá* of the town harbours one of the three guild sections of the weavers. However,

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according to Nupe tradition, weaving was not originally a guild-organized craft, but a free profession carried out individually, like mat-weaving, for example, to-day. It became a 'closed profession' and a guild-organized craft when the Nupe kings imported craftsmen from the south, who brought with them their own special technique and who, aliens in Nupe country, kept to themselves, neither intermarrying nor coming much in contact with the rest of the population. These imported groups of weavers were *konú*, freed slaves of war. They form two of the three groups of weavers which we find in Bida to-day. The first is composed of people from Salu, a town in Yagba country, who were settled in Bida by *Etsu* Masaba. The members of this group, which is the largest of the three weaver guilds, live scattered over the whole town; their guild-head, however, used to reside in the *Etsu* Masaba quarter. The second *konú* group is of Yoruba extraction, and is concentrated in the *Etsu* Usman quarter. This group has representatives also outside Bida, in a number of Nupe villages: Kutigi, Enagi, Sakpe, and Dabbā. The third group of weavers, in the *Etsu* Umaru quarter, is composed of Nupe proper. It is a very small group, consisting only of one compound. This Nupe group of weavers forms a section of a large kinship group which comprises farmers, who live outside Bida, as well. They trace their profession to a man who came to Bida from Rabá, as a *bara* of *Etsu* Umaru. Originally a warrior, this man later settled in the town and learned weaving from a *konú* craftsman. At that time, I was told, weaving was a lucrative and highly respected profession. Weaving has been the profession of his family for three generations now, and the family heads are received at the court and treated as official representatives of their group like all heads of guilds or guild sections. Small groups of weavers of Nupe extraction are also found in various villages in the Emirate. Their labour organization closely resembles that of this last group of weavers, but they remain outside the Bida guild system.

The technique of weaving is the same in all groups. Their loom is of the narrow upright type, worked with pedals, which is common all over Northern Nigeria. These looms produce narrow strips of cloth 5 inches wide. The looms are placed in a half-open shed, six to seven in one row, in the inner courtyard of the compound, each loom being worked by one man. The weavers have to buy a large proportion of their tools from other craftsmen: the shuttle and the wooden posts on which the loom rests, and which are frequently beautifully carved and painted, are made by the carpenters; the iron rods used as pedals and the iron bar upon which the finished strips of cloth are wound, are made by the blacksmiths. Only the weaver's reed is produced by the weavers themselves. A complete outfit for one man costs from 6s. to 12s., according to whether cheap plain or expensive carved wooden posts are used. The Bida weavers use mostly thread of European manufacture, both plain and coloured, and only very rarely native-ginned and -dyed cotton. The village weavers use mostly the latter kind.

The men who occupy a common workshop are members of the same family and household group. In one house, for example, I found

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1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942

FF52 Nupe FF52

One piece of

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cloth of this expensive kind is sold for 4s. 6d.; as the cost of the material is 3s. 4d., the profit made in five days' work is 1s. 2d., or just under 3d. a day. If cheaper, plain material is used the profit is slightly smaller; the cost of the material for one piece of cloth is 1s. 6d., and the cloth is sold for 2s. 6d., six pieces being again produced each month, which gives a profit of 1s. per cloth, or 2d. a day. But instead of cutting up and sewing together the cloth in form of the *ede*, the weaver can also sell the full-length cloth as such to the cap-makers, or, better still, can make it into caps himself. A weaver can produce one cap (made of one *kpere* of cloth) each day, that is, twenty caps a month, allowing for two intervals of five days each for the weaving of the cloth. The white cloth caps, called *fula*, are very popular in Bida and are sold at prices from 9d. to 1s.; the cost of the material being 6s. 8d. the profit on twenty caps is thus between 7s. and 12s., or from 3d. to 5d. a day. It is interesting to note that this last kind of work, although more profitable and also in much greater demand, is nevertheless regarded as a slightly degrading occupation. *Fula* making, my informants pointed out, is tailor's work, and not the proper work for trained weavers; they undertake it, as they frankly admit, only in order to obtain money for tax or bride-price. In this respect, then, the dissolution of the *efako*-unit offers another benefit to the young members of the group who are out for quick money: for, relieved of their duties towards the head of the group, they are also relieved of their duties towards the ethical standards of the profession, to which the older men still cling.

In the villages only cheaper qualities of cloth, mostly native-dyed cloth, are produced; striped cloth which is sold for 1s. 3d., the material costing 9d. and the dye 3d., and plain indigo-dyed cloth (a kind of cloth that would find no buyers in Bida), sold for 1s. 9d., and produced at a cost of 1s. 3d. But even when the village weavers produce the same kind of cloth as the Bida craftsmen, they sell it cheaper, being content with a smaller profit. Thus striped cloth of the kind sold in Bida for 2s. 6d. is produced by the village artisan for 2s., allowing a profit of 9d. instead of 1s. 2d. On the other hand, the work and material of the village weavers are known to be inferior to that of the Bida craftsmen. The village weavers frankly admit it. They use the cruder indigenous dye instead of European dyes, they gin their own cotton and work with this inferior cotton-thread which breaks frequently during the weaving. They take ten days for the weaving of a piece of cloth which the Bida craftsmen finish in five. But just because they limit themselves to this cheaper and cruder material and cater exclusively for the less wealthy customers, they can stand the competition of European cloth better than the Bida weavers, who have specialized in more ambitious and expensive work. Here are the comparative prices: a striped cloth of European (or Japanese) manufacture is sold in Bida for 5s., as against 4s. 6d. for Bida-woven cloth and 1s. 3d. for cloth produced in the village.

Formerly, when the *efako* system in weaving was still capable of supporting a whole family, the younger members of the *efako* group practised a little farm-work as *baad*. The family head did not join in this additional work and often, if he was an old man, he did not even take part in actual weaving. His income was supplemented by training

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288 apprentices. This source of income, formerly quite considerable, dis-
 542 appeared when weaving became less profitable. Young boys of about
 467 10 years, mostly sons of farmers, were the pupils; they stayed with the
 weaver for from four to five years, and the work which they produced
 during the time of their apprenticeship belonged to their master; when
 their training was completed the parents of the pupil would bring one
 bundle of corn as payment.

288 The loose organization of the labour-unit has its counterpart in the
 467 organization of the profession at large. Among the weavers no co-operation
 on a larger scale exists. We have even seen that individuals are quite
 ready to abandon the profession for other, more attractive, work—an
 attitude unprecedented among blacksmiths or glass-workers. Yet the
 symbols of guild organization, the guild ranks, are still preserved. Each
 group of weavers has its titled guild-head: the head of the Salu (Yagba)
 weavers is called *Maji*, and the head of the Yoruba weavers *Leshe*. He is
 also regarded as the head of all *koni* weavers in Nupe, and used to receive
 from them small annual gifts or tributes. But this common allegiance
 and co-operation reflects less the professional union than the tribal and
 cultural unity of these scattered Yoruba groups in Nupe country. The
 head of the Nupe group of weavers in Bida has no official title but is
 called simply *Ndahó*, Grandfather. The position of the group-head
 carries to-day none of the influence and authority which characterizes the
 guild-heads of other crafts; he neither receives gifts from the fellow
 craftsmen nor is he expected to advise or help them in their work. As in
 all other guild-organized crafts the official position of the guild-heads of
 the weavers was based originally on their role as intermediaries between
 the king and the craftsmen of Bida. But this role has lost very early all
 practical importance—earlier than it did in the other Nupe crafts. To
 quote the guild-head of the Yagba weavers: '*Etsu* Masaba still used to
 come to our workshops and order cloth personally from the *Maji*. But
Etsu Umaru, who came after him, already bought what he needed on the
 market, and so did all the later kings of Nupe.'

BEADWORKERS

306 As a last example of guild-organized industries I will describe the
 organization of the beadworkers in Bida. Their craft shows certain
 specific features which make it specially interesting and distinguish it
 from the other crafts of Nupe. Beadworking represents, first of all, a
 typical refining industry, which involves a system of re-exportation com-
 parable only to the most complex forms of economic enterprise found in
 Western civilization. It involves further the use of money capital and
 credit operations on a scale unparalleled in Nupe industry. It is, finally,
 a pure luxury industry, producing more expensive goods than either
 glass- or brass-work. These various factors have contributed to making
 the beadworking industry of Bida extremely vulnerable; it has suffered
 more than the other crafts from the economic stress of the recent years
 and, a significant result of this, presents the picture of a complete dis-
 integration of co-operative production.

306 time 5d. Evidently, only a man who possesses some capital can assume
442 the role of contractor, and the ordinary beadworker can hardly hope,
439 with his daily wages of 1½d., ever to attain this position. In a few cases
I have found two contractors in the same workshop; but many other
workshops numbered no 'capitalist' among their workers. In a situation
of this kind two other methods are open to the beadworkers: either they
buy the crude beads on credit from the traders and pay them back after
they have sold the finished article; or they undertake the 'refining' work
on a piece-contract for a trader in beads—the Hausa or Arab trader, or
sometimes a 'capitalist' woman of the beadworker's family. In neither
case does the work of the beadworkers include *efakó* work, even on the
smallest scale. All work is done individually, and even unmarried young
men are working on their own, being assigned by the contractor a task
suitable to their skill and experience. The beadworkers, finally, do not
practise farming in addition to the handicraft.

306 Formerly it was the family head and, on a larger scale, the guild-
442 master who assumed regularly the role of contractor and financier. As
467 in all other crafts the guild-head made himself responsible for 'mainten-
ance of labour' in the group, which means that he undertook to provide
the necessary working capital and credit and to distribute the work
effectively among the craftsmen. The guild-head, called *Maji*, Master,
also acted as the agent of the king in all matters concerning the trade in
beads. When the foreign traders in precious stones arrived in Bida, they
would not take their goods at once to the public market, but would show
them first to the guild-head of the *lantana*, who would select what he
needed, and what he thought suitable for the king and court. He would
take the collection of newly arrived beads to the king and advise him on
the purchase; then, receiving the order for the 'refining' of the beads, he
would distribute the work among the workshops of the *lantana* paying
the workers the usual piece-rate and keeping a large commission for
himself. The constant demands of the court—the requirements of the
fashionable ladies in the harems of Nupe royalty, bride-price and dowry
(of which chains of beads form an essential part) which the king pays for
innumerable relations and dependants—kept the beadworkers of Bida
busy. Orders amounting to £5 and more at a time, which secured the
134 *Maji* a commission of £1, were by no means rare. The profits made in
this fashion enabled the guild-head to finance the ordinary work of his
group and to offer them credit for the purchase of their 'raw material'.
In these times of prosperity the individual worker who desired to act
himself as contractor could without difficulty obtain large credits (up to
£1 or £2) from the Hausa bead traders. The guild organization and the
strong financial position of the guild-head were evidently regarded as
sufficient security.

306 All this is a thing of the past. The court no longer buys beads from
467 the beadworker guild. European beads, cheaper and much more
178 attractive in shape and colouring, have crushed the native industry.
With the decline of the financial position of the guild-head, outside credit

* Some of the European beads which are sold in the markets of Nigeria are, in fact, specially manufactured as copies of the native style.

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has also disappeared. The result is a complete disintegration of the guild system. The guild-head, no longer able to act as financier and contractor, has lost his position of authority; as his contribution to the productive organization of the group was concerned exclusively with these financial and credit operations, the very *raison d'être* of a guild-head has disappeared. This is evident in the manner in which the *Maji* is treated by the other craftsmen; no one pays the slightest attention to him. Since he is too old now to earn money, he is supported by his son—but this is entirely a family matter, and in no way concerns the professional group at large. He receives no gifts or shares in the profits, not so much as an occasional present of *kole*-nuts, which even in the greatly weakened guild organization of the weavers still marks the privileged position of the guild-head. If I have called this change in the productive organization of the beadworkers a decline and disintegration, it is also felt as such by the people themselves. To them, it appears as the sad decline of a once highly respected and well-organized craft: as one of them said, 'the beadworkers to-day live from hand to mouth; their *Maji* has no longer any authority; theirs is an unlucky trade' (*gwa fi*, lit. an unlucky hand).

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CHAPTER XV

INDUSTRIES (*continued*)

INDIVIDUAL CRAFTS

463 THE guild-organized crafts represent, as we have seen, a specific
 467 social group or class—the class of skilled artisans—which only
 occasionally enlarges its membership by adopting individuals from other
 professional or social groups. The individual crafts, on the other hand,
 present a vaguely defined and ever fluid group which recruits itself from
 every stratum of Nupe society, the peasant class as well as the 'intelli-
 gentia', slaves and clients as well as members of the nobility. We shall
 see presently that men of the titled classes who have lost their former
 sources of income frequently adopt an individual craft as a new means of
 livelihood. The technical conditions which contribute to make the
 guild-organized crafts into 'closed groups', organized on the lines of
 more or less intensive co-operation, are absent in the industries which
 are carried out as 'free professions'. Tailors, straw-hat makers, or mat-
 weavers need no workshops; they can work anywhere, in any part of the
 house, in sleeping-huts as well as in a corner of the *katamba*. Some
 craftsmen even wander from place to place and practise their work
 wherever there is a prospect of trade. Many Bida tailors, for example,
 have made a practice of visiting neighbouring villages on the
 market days or at the time of the annual ceremonies and festivals, when
 they can be sure of finding plenty of work. Nor does their work involve
 co-operation, or necessitate the use of expensive tools. Mat-weavers
 work with their hands, straw-hat makers use a block of clay or wood
 (called *ekugi*) over which they shape the crown of the head, a tool which
 they can easily make themselves. Tailors, embroiderers, or leather-
 workers need, in addition to the material, only needle and thread.

463 Although there exist, specially in Bida, experts in these crafts
 who practise them as their only profession, the technique itself is
 simple enough to be learned by anyone in a very short time. We re-
 member the farmers who carry out a handicraft as *bucd* work in their
 spare time. People in the town similarly practise these handicrafts as
 leisure-time occupations, in addition to other work, or as a lucrative
 pastime. Many learned men and students of the Koran do a little tailor-
 ing beside. Embroidery, a more delicate work, involving taste and
 a certain skill, has become the pastime occupation of many members
 of the 'intelligentsia'. Of hat-making, on the other hand, the Nupe say
 that it is the ideal occupation for 'lazy people', who can do nothing
 else, meaning particularly those impoverished 'people of quality'
 who are neither skilled nor resourceful enough to find other means of
 livelihood.

463 The varied demands of the Nupe markets have also called into being
 868 various other, minor, handicrafts, some of which are so easy that young
 boys of 10 or 11 are encouraged to take them up as a first *bucd* occupa-

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men are always ready to try their hand at something new, and changes of profession are frequent. The record is held, perhaps, by a Bida man who started as a mat-maker (the occupation of his older brother), changed over to cushion-making, then to tailoring, and eventually to leather-work, which he found more lucrative and which he is practising at present. *Efahó* co-operation on the narrowest basis, between father and unmarried sons, occurs occasionally. Thus in a family of embroiderers a father and two sons worked together; working on the same gown, the father would execute the more elaborate designs, while his two sons carried out the simpler embroidery; the sons were maintained by the father, and all earnings went to him. With simpler kind of work, this co-operation is reduced further, and we find, for example, this arrangement between a father and his unmarried son, both straw-hat makers: the father took half of his son's earnings, and in return maintained him, and would in due course pay part of his bride-price (he would be unable to bear the full expense). But in the majority of cases this rudimentary co-operation, too, disappears, and even unmarried sons work entirely on their own.

One might wonder whether these 'individualistic' crafts have not, at some previous stage, shown a larger measure of co-operative organization. Remembering the weakening of guild-organized crafts under the pressure of modern conditions, we might, in fact, ask whether the individual crafts as we find them to-day do not represent merely a final stage of that incipient disintegration. This is indeed the case in one of the industries practised to-day as individual crafts—leather-work. Leather-work involves specialized technique and skill in much higher measure than do the other individual handicrafts. But it also used to involve comparatively large-scale co-operation of a group of workers, in the sense of an efficient division of labour, which was meant to ensure the execution of large and frequently urgent orders. A guild-head, called *Mageji*, organized and controlled group production; he also acted as the official intermediary between the craftsmen and the king, who was, again, their most important customer: for the Bida leather-workers supplied a large proportion of the military equipment of the Nupe army, such as saddlery and leather shields, sword-sheaths, and quivers for arrows.

The individual craft which is most a product of modern conditions is machine-tailoring. It introduces certain new features into the productive system of Nupe which are of special interest to the student of culture contact. Machine-tailoring does not demand long training or special skill—young men learn to use a sewing-machine in a week. The machine-tailor can reckon with a very constant demand for his services. The number of machine-tailors in Nupe has, in fact, greatly increased even during the periods which I spent in the country. In 1936, for example, I found six sewing-machines in Kutigi market, against three in 1934. Machine-tailors, like ordinary tailors, will regularly visit village markets (walking perhaps ten miles or more, carrying the sewing-machines on their heads), and appear in villages a fortnight or month before an annual festival, when their services will be greatly in demand.

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MEANING AND FUTURE OF GUILD ORGANIZATION

467 In examining the different industries of Nupe we have met with operative organizations of widely varying degrees of closeness and intensity. The individual crafts appear in this respect as one extreme, the zero point, as it were, of this scale of intensity of co-operation. What, then, are the conditions determining the degree of closeness in productive organization? Or, more specifically: Why are certain native industries guild-organized, and others left to independent individual enterprise?

We can discover four conditions of the closeness of productive co-operation: (1) The nature of the productive technique and the measure of actual working together which it entails. In this respect the work of glass-makers and iron-ore miners must be placed at the top of the list, and the work of bead-makers or individual craftsmen at the bottom. (2) Special skill and experience involved in the productive technique. The glass makers, with their jealously guarded trade secret, again, top the list; the individual crafts represent the other extreme, of techniques which can be easily acquired by anyone. (3) The regularity of the demand for the goods produced by an industry, and thus, indirectly, its economic success. The work of glass-makers or brass-smiths presents one extreme, the work of bead-makers or weavers the other. (4) The comparative unimportance of originality and inventiveness on the part of the individual craftsman. In this respect brass-smith work shows the most 'individualistic', and blacksmith-work, the most closely integrated, form of production.¹

The balance which, in the actual case, is achieved between these four factors determines the final structure of the productive organization. The issue is, however, complicated by the fact that different factors bring about similar results. Thus both a high degree of 'individualism' (as among brass-smiths) and a low measure of economic success (as among beadworkers) tend towards a dissolution of the co-operative organization. On the other hand, we find a certain closeness of organization visible in the tendency of craftsmen to work together in the same locality and perhaps in the same workshop, when most factors are pressing towards dissolution. Thus beadworkers of different families and households still tend to share a common workshop and to live together in the same quarter although their technique of production does not necessitate actual working together, nor the economic success of their craft favour co-operation. This qualified co-operation appears to be due to the advantage of keeping in close contact with one another for the purpose of profiting from each other's experience, and of keeping abreast of fashions and new styles.

467 433 Efficiency in group production appears, then, as the main motive for co-operation on a guild scale. But while the first and third condition refer to efficiency in the narrower, technical, sense of the word, i.e. ease, speed, and economy of production, the second condition reveals a more

¹ With the weavers we find an additional motive for closeness of co-operation in the tribal and cultural unity of these alien, 'Nupe-ized', groups. We can disregard this type of co-operation, which is not limited nor peculiar to labour organization.

467 specifically social and cultural aspect. Efficiency in this sense means
 433 continuity of the craft and of craft knowledge; it means the ability to
 raise, through the medium of an hereditary, imperceptibly changing
 labour group, successive generations of craftsmen. If in these
 respects production is planned for an unchanging future, the agency
 of the third factor must expose it to the disruptive effects of time
 and change. For it may appear as if modern economic changes
 directed their most destructive attacks against this third condition
 of closeness and co-operation, which is dependence upon regular
 demand. This influence is especially visible in the gradual disappear-
 467 ance of orders from the main customer of the country, king and court.
 177 The Great *Sallah*, once the occasion for numerous orders from the
 433 court, which kept the workshops of Bida busy for weeks, is now an
 occasion for making purchases at the stores that trade in European
 goods. At the *Sallah* of 1935, the first *Sallah* of the newly installed *Etsu*,
 the traditional royal gifts of kola-nuts were sent out, not in ornamental
 brass bowls of native make, but in newly bought enamelled teapots; the
 king's bodyguard, newly equipped, wore, not Bida gowns and turbans
 or native-made straw hats, but red blankets and Trilby hats; and many
 notables who would have appeared formerly on horses with costly
 trappings and gorgeous saddle-cloths, rode in on new, shining bicycles.
 Conspicuous though the competition of European goods appears, it is
 not the only reason for the decline of Nupe craft-guilds. The very
 organization of guild-organized crafts has contributed to lowering their
 resistance to outside pressure. The inertia inherent in the rigid group-
 organization with its traditional standards of production prevents the
 craft-guild from readjusting itself to new demands with the same ease as
 the individual craftsman, who is free to change his mode of production
 and to gain success by new methods. The decision of the younger men
 among the weavers to abandon the traditional production and to turn to
 the more profitable production of cap-making, the success of the most
 'individualistic' of all crafts, brass-work, are instances of this.

435 But readjustment involves in reality two different and independent
 433 processes: adjustment to modern conditions may mean both adjustment
 in price and cost of production, and adjustment with regard to the kind
 of goods produced. A close examination of this question is of special
 interest as attempts to preserve and help native arts and crafts are to-day
 officially sponsored by the educational departments in many African
 colonies. In these attempts the second type of adjustment is frequently
 taken into account exclusively, the first being either ignored or artificially
 eliminated by turning native crafts into tourist and 'curio' industries
 which can command prices quite out of proportion to the native
 economic system. That the Nupe crafts themselves have adjusted prices
 to demands is clearly shown in the general fall in prices which has taken
 place during the last five or ten years.¹ Thus mats of the best quality
 were sold, nine to ten years ago, for 3s.; in 1934 for 9d. and 1s.; in 1936,

¹ In the two years I spent in Nupe country—two years which saw a partial
 economic recovery—I witnessed a corresponding slight rise in prices of native
 craft products.

433 We can now place the two systems of industry side by side and compare their respective assets and defects. Against highly efficient co-operation and mutual assistance embodied in the guild organization we have to set the free play of competition allowed in individual crafts. Against the principle of continuity and planned training we have to set higher adaptability and larger scope for individual initiative and inventiveness. Broadly speaking, it cannot be doubted that uncontrolled, 'individualistic', industries stand a higher chance of developing production, possibly on new lines, and of achieving technical progress. Moreover, efficient training and continuity of craft knowledge can, to some extent, also be assured in the narrower form of co-operation vested in the small labour-unit; this is shown in the village groups of blacksmiths and weavers. The question which we have asked at the beginning of this section thus still stands: Why has Nupe society chosen, of these two possible methods of organizing industrial enterprise, the method that assured group efficiency and continuity on the largest scale, and group efficiency rather than progress and individual initiative?

467 The main reason lies in the political system of the country. The 656 guilds are, as we have seen, built closely into the political framework. Let me recall the main facts: the guild-head is the agent of the king in all matters concerning the group; like the members of the nobility, he is the holder of an official rank, and is admitted to the *nkó*, the King's Council. The guilds themselves enjoy a privileged position in the Nupe state in that they were exempted from tax and were assigned a social position superior to that of other commoners, peasants, or traders. Yet they were, in other respects, very much controlled; they were bound to their profession and could not freely change it. They were even bound to the locality in which they practised their trade and could not move from it without permission of the guild-head. If a village chief desired to have a certain Bida craft represented in his village, he had to apply to the guild-head in the capital; this happened some years ago in Kutigi, when the chief requested the guild-head of the carpenters in Bida to send him a craftsman to settle and practise in his village. The craftsmen, then, are the king's craftsmen. Not only are they dependent on the king for their prosperity, but they are also controlled and supervised by him and his official agent, the guild-master. This organization of the craft-guilds amounts to a full control of the political system over all the more important industries of the country. We may even go further and say that this control was dictated by the needs of the state: based on constant warfare, committed to uphold the splendour of a huge court, the political system has to guarantee a dependable, uninterrupted supply of all that is needed—arms, tools, clothes, saddles, as well as the many symbols of wealth and status. Upon this dedication of the craft-guilds to the service of the state the seal is set by the discriminative social appreciation which the Nupe people extend to the different crafts.¹ The noblest craft is that of the brass- and sword-smiths, for they, as an informant put it, are 'the makers of arms'.

¹ See p. 103.

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305 larger group, the guild section or guild). The work of the barbers is
 759 organized on the familiar lines of *efakó* and *bucd*. Although their work
 542 does not entail actually working together, a certain kind of work is
 regarded as a concern of the family group as such and as falling under
 the rules of *efakó*. The *efakó* principle itself is interpreted in an unusual
 sense. In the work of the barbers orders or summons do not usually
 reach the individual barber directly, but come to him via the head of the
 household, who allots the various tasks to the different family members.
 The proceeds from all work carried out on these lines are divided among
 the whole *efakó* group, in accordance with a certain schedule which takes
 305 into account the seniority of the different family members. The tasks
 759 which come under *efakó* rule are the most highly paid jobs: the shaving
 553 of the hair and the cutting of tribal marks at the name-giving ceremony,
 542 and the circumcision of boys. The first task is performed at the occasion
 of an important household feast, and the barber-doctors rarely fail to
 benefit from the generosity that goes with festal mood. These simpler
 operations are executed by the younger men of the family, but the family
 head and the older men will also be present, as guests quite as much as
 in their professional capacity—which latter may reveal itself in no more
 than an occasional hint thrown out to the young colleague. The barbers
 will all sit together, and in front of them there will be a bowl into which
 every visitor is expected to drop a coin, the largest contribution coming
 from the parents of the newborn child. Let us follow the fate of a shil-
 ling dropped into this bowl of the barbers at a name-giving ceremony in
 a Bida house: 2d. is retained by the grandmother, who held the infant
 during the operation; 1d. goes to each of the five junior members of the
efakó group (including the young man who performed the operation);
 1½d. each to two older men of the family, the family head and his younger
 brother; and 2d., finally, to the head of the guild section.

305 All other work of the barbers is regarded as *bucd*: ordinary haircutting
 759 and shaving as well as medical treatment.¹ The latter, more lucrative,
 work is a prerogative of the older men, who alone know herbs and drugs
 and can perform the *turare*. The younger men will be taught these craft
 secrets when they reach a certain age. And thus another principle of
 family work is realized in the organization of the Nupe barber-doctors,
 namely, the balance in favour of senior family members which we have
 observed in the organization of farm-labour and native industries.

305 We have seen that in the distribution of *efakó* income a certain con-
 759 tribution goes to the head of the guild section. This, then, is a first
 467 instance of economic co-operation of the large professional unit. This co-
 operation is visible also in another, external, feature of this professional
 organization. In each of the three day-markets of Bida there is a special
 barbers' 'hall', a spacious open hut, where all the barbers (specially the
 family heads) meet in the afternoon, and sit and wait for clients and
 summons. This hut is built and kept up from a common fund. The
 existence of this common fund is itself evidence of a close co-operation
 in the financial field. Into this fund, which is called *dakhi*, every barber

¹ The barbers are usually paid in money; but when the Bida barbers tour the
 country villages they often take firewood or food in lieu of payment.

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305 pays a small amount of money at regular intervals; the fund is adminis-
 759 tered by the guild-head; he deducts from it money for possible common
 467 expenses, and pays out the rest in full to every member of the guild
 section in turn, after every pay-day. This financial arrangement is fairly
 common in Nupe, specially among traders and labourers, and we shall
 discuss it in more detail later. The barbers, however, are the only pro-
 fessional group which has embodied it in its professional organization
 and utilizes it as a system of mutual financial assistance vested in the
 craft-guild.

The guild organization is restricted to Bida town. In the villages, even
 in the larger places, one or two barbers are sufficient to meet the normal
 demand. Besides, the medicine-man of the pagan districts would con-
 stitute a serious competition to the Bida doctors. But so far as barbers
 and barber-doctors are wanted in the country, the organization in the
 capital supplies them, either permanently or temporarily. Certain Bida
 barbers, for example, have settled in villages; others tour the country
 regularly, stopping in this or that place for longer or shorter periods.
 Even in these tours of the country districts round Bida, the barbers keep
 to the territory of 'their' royal house, i.e. the royal house on whose land
 in Bida their home stands. Although it clearly cannot be said of the
 barber-doctors that they 'serve the state' in the same way as blacksmiths
 or leather-workers, this arrangement is a striking evidence of the fact that
 their association with the political structure of the country is as strongly
 marked, and that they, again, are in certain respects the 'king's crafts-
 men'.

DRUMMERS AND DANCERS

533 The drummers in Bida, true to the more 'advanced' urban conception
 467 of art, are individualists; in the village, where the art of drumming be-
 longs not only to the recreational side of social life, but also forms part of
 the organization of ritual and ceremony as well as production (we re-
 member the part drumming plays in the farming *egbe*), it is less an 'art'
 in the modern sense of the word than a 'craft', working for well-defined
 institutionalized demands, and charged with responsibilities of a graver
 order. Drumming in the village thus moves in the framework of a close
 organization on guild lines. In every larger Nupe village we find a
 special group of drummers and musicians who, though belonging to
 different families and houses, yet recognize the authority of a common
 head, the *Etsu Dsā*, the King of the Drummers. Certain other, sub-
 ordinate titles, are distributed, in guild fashion, among the other
 members of the craft. The art of drumming remains in the family and
 is handed on from father to son. You may see small boys practising
 [868] drumming on little toy-like instruments under the eye of the father.
 They will go with him wherever he is called to perform, watching him
 and, when they are sufficiently advanced, accompanying him on their
 own drums. Sometimes boys from other families desire to become
 drummers. Their father will then get in touch with the head of the
 drummers, and give him his son as apprentice. The young apprentice
 will visit the drummer's house every day for his lesson. In the beginning

533 he will be allowed to use the drums in the house; later he will buy him-
 467 self a drum of his own. No payment is taken for the tuition; but when
 [322 the novice later performs at ceremonies or feasts, he will send his former
 435] teacher a small gift of money or food. The drums are made by the wood-
 workers on the river, who are alone in the position to obtain the suitable
 wood. One large drum costs 10s. The drummers themselves cover the
 drum and provide the goatskin for the diaphragm.

533 But all this is a thing of the past. To-day apprentices are hardly ever
 467 taken. The drummers, like so many other Nupe craftsmen, complain
 178 bitterly about the bad times. Formerly, they told me, they used to be
 paid 6s. to 8s. a night; to-day they receive 3s. for the night or, for one
 'song' (played, for example, at a family feast), one kola-nut. This decline
 appears to be due to two factors: first, to the impact of Mohammedanism
 and the gradual disappearance of rituals and ceremonies in which drum-
 ming formerly played a prominent part and the songs of which were
 stored in the memory of the village drummers; and second, to the
 spreading of fashions from the capital, and the competition of the more
 'refined', famous Bida drummers and musicians. The organization of
 the village drummers has survived only in the names of the guild ranks.
 The drummers, who once devoted only their spare time to farming, are
 to-day mainly farmers and carry on their old profession only as a side-
 line.

533 In Bida drumming and music were never tied to the narrow scope of
 545 limited traditional occasions; nor was the development of the artistic
 style rigidly hemmed in ritual. Both the profession and the style were
 allowed to develop freely, and the result is an impressive variety in artistic
 production and in its social counterpart, the organization of the craft. The
 Bida practice also introduces a completely novel element into the tradi-
 tional craft, namely, music and dancing executed by professional women
 dancers and singers. A number of performers, drummers and women
 singers (who rarely come of one family or household) associate with one
 another, and form themselves into a 'band' or 'company'. In this form
 they become known, are invited to perform at feasts and similar occasions,
 and also tour the country, sometimes even going abroad to other large
 towns in Nigeria where Nupe music always finds an appreciative public.¹
 In constant co-operation the 'company' builds up its special 'repertory'
 and evolves its individual style. There are several such 'companies' in
 Bida, each with its special repertory, style, and technique. They are
 known by the name of their leader, or by the name of the style in which
 they have specialized. Thus we find the group of the drummer Sogba,
 or the group of the woman singer Fati, or a group called *zaworo* (lit. 'new
 man'), so called because it performs in a style only developed since the
 days of the 'new men', i.e. the British. One or the other 'company' is
 known to be patronized by a certain noble family and will be summoned
 at every occasion when the services of drummers and dancers are re-
 quired, a name-giving ceremony, a wedding, or an age-grade festivity.
 Certain drummers even enter a kind of *bara* relation with a nobleman

¹ I met a company of Bida drummers and women singers, whom I had known
 in Bida, in Lagos, where they were 'on tour'.

456 can normally exercise. Such are wars, slave-raids, political abuses which might deprive a group of the fruits of its labour, the loss of a member of the working group through imprisonment, or—to-day—unexpected fluctuations in the market for export commodities. The insurance which the Nupe productive system can provide against risks of this kind is, of necessity, limited in scope and efficiency. I have spoken already of certain forms which this insurance took in the traditional society: client-ship and political allegiance. More interesting to us here are risks which are inherent in the productive organization itself, and which represent 'normal' risks in the sense that experience shows them to be ever present. Into this category come risks due, for example, to a failure of the crop, to marketing difficulties, a temporary economic stringency, or a temporary deficiency in the labour organization owing to illness or old age of individual members of the labour-unit. With risks of this kind the Nupe productive system is well equipped to deal, either through its normal labour organization or through certain mechanisms specially devised to provide 'insurance'.

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592 The 'normal' risks in agriculture are insured against by means of the very constitution of the *efahó*, the co-operative labour-unit. A large co-operative group is capable of utilizing fully the highly diversified agricultural technique of the country, and of spreading cultivation, both locally and with regard to the crops grown, so as to eliminate the risk of a total failure. In a large working-unit it is also comparatively easy to make up for the temporary elimination of a worker. In a group of this kind invalid or aged group members can be assigned lighter work, or can even be supported by the rest of the group without doing any work. The smaller the group the more difficult it becomes to distribute tasks in this fashion, to spare a worker, and feed an 'extra mouth'. In the small, two-men or one-man labour-unit, the retirement of a member means the end of the working group, and his support places a heavy strain on the remaining organization. A new *ad hoc* arrangement may become necessary, in which independent small labour-units have to combine to maintain the retired member. Here is an instance which I noted in a *tunga* near Bida: a family of five was divided in two labour-units, one consisting of two adults, and the other of an old man, their father, who worked together with his two young grandsons. As his labour-unit could not produce enough for food and tax, the sons contributed ten bundles of grain a year towards the cost of their father's household. That a situation of this kind may, in an extreme case, lead to a complete break-down of the 'insurance' scheme could be seen from household budget C quoted above, which showed an old man and an invalid still depending on their own greatly reduced working capacity. Another example is that of a farmer who had hurt his arm and, having been disabled for one year, became a temporary labourer the following year to make up for the losses he had sustained.

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467 The group co-operation in the guild-organized crafts similarly provides insurance against 'normal' risks. The guild organization, as we

¹ An analogous example from a family of craftsmen was quoted above, in household budget E.

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have seen, not only supplies its members with efficient training, but also guarantees, to some extent, a steady market for their products. The guild-head, moreover, is enabled by the special resources involved in his position to act as the 'banker' of the group and come to the financial assistance of individual members. 456 467

Certain other economic arrangements designed to provide insurance operate outside the labour-unit, and are thus of special importance for the individual craftsmen and the free professions. The familiar recourse to clientship is a first instance. By sacrificing part of his personal freedom as well as his earnings, the *bara* buys the patronage of an influential person. Though this patronage will be appealed to specially against the 'extraneous' risks due to political factors, it plays a part also in more 'normal' circumstances. Thus I found that a barber had recently become the client of a certain nobleman in his quarter of the town in order to secure a regular and good clientele; it is significant that the father of the barber had not been a *bara*, i.e. had not felt the need to 'insure' his more prosperous business. A young hat-maker told me that he intended to attach himself as *bara* to an influential rank-holder, with whose help he hoped to start business as a trader. I have also spoken of the Mallams and drummers, to whom clientship means the guarantee of success in their profession. 456 566

A different method of insuring against risks is embodied in the practice of borrowing money. 'Pawning' represents the firmly institutionalized form of borrowing—an institution which provides against normal as well as abnormal risks, and in which a social relationship closely akin to that of patron and client forms the basis of the financial transaction. Other forms of borrowing occur irregularly, and with a narrow scope. No professional money-lenders exist; the individual in need of money borrows it mostly from close relations, more rarely from friends or 'patrons'. The most frequent form of borrowing is for a husband to borrow from his wife. An indirect form of borrowing money from one's wife, not uncommon in Bida, is the practice of wealthy women to contribute to the bride-price of their sons and to other expenses, which, in accordance with Nupe kinship ideas, should be borne by the father. 456 426

A final insurance arrangement is provided in a specific financial institution operating somewhat on the lines of a 'pooling club'. It is called *dashi* in Nupe (*adashi* in Hausa) and plays—or used to play—a very important part in Nupe economy. We must describe it here in detail. 456

The *dashi* is a pure business arrangement, a free association of a number of men and women who agree to enter this financial co-operation for a certain limited period. Each member undertakes to pay regularly (for example, every week, or five days, or every month) a certain amount of money into a common fund, as many times as the group numbers members. Each time when the contributions have been collected a different member is entitled to draw the total fund, until every member has had his share. Members may also contribute double subscriptions, and then be entitled to two 'draws' in the course of the *dashi*. The allotment of the fund does not follow a fixed rule, but is left to the head of the group to work out. A member who is urgently in need of money can

INDUSTRIES, CRAFTS, AND PROFESSIONS

467 Industries and crafts are practised for the most part by men in their homes or in attached workshops. Some involve co-operative group production, for which the labour unit is an *efakó*, corresponding to the *efakó* for farm work (p. 26). In most cases such work is supplemented by individual (*bucá*) work. Slave labour was formerly employed. Production is organized in guilds controlled by a guild-head, and thus considerable control is exercised, through the political system, over all the more important industries of the country.

Craft guilds control the mining and smelting of ores, iron-working, brass-working, and silver-smithing, glass making, weaving, bead-work, building, wood-work and carpentry, and butchery. Individual crafts are tailoring and embroidery, leather-work, indigo-dyeing, straw-hat making, mat and bag making, basket-work, rope and twine making. Cloth, mats, bags, rope, and twine are commonly made in many villages, though they appear for sale only in the larger markets. Free professions include barber-doctors, drummers and musicians, and dancers and singers (men and women).³¹

467 Iron-ore workers are called *edudacúš*. The mines are on the slopes of the low, 325 flat-topped hills and consist of shallow pits; the smelting furnaces are close by. A large proportion of the iron now used in smithing is bought in bars from European firms, but native-smelted iron is considered superior as it is said to be stronger and more durable. It is regularly used for the blacksmiths' own tools.³²

467 Blacksmiths are called *iswata* or *iswata gbagba*. There are one or two work-shops in every village, and three "wards" of smiths in Bida. The guild-head lives 326 in Bida and his control extends in certain respects over the whole country. It is a [463] "closed" craft. The forge is generally in a separate hut at some distance from the compound. There are usually three or four workers, who are related, in a unit. The work is mainly *efakó* but there is some *bucá* work, consisting mainly of repairs to hoes, etc. The main products are blades for hoes, bush knives (though these are now mostly bought from the European trading stores), large nails and hooks for building, and the small brackets used in canoe making; blacksmiths also make some of their own tools, hammers, etc. Charcoal required for the furnaces is produced at intervals in quantities by two or three men of one workshop. The early rains are the smiths' busy season.

There are a number of blacksmiths in Basa-Nge District who sell their wares in the Igala markets.³³

Brass- and silver-smiths work almost exclusively in Bida town where the furnace is often in the entrance-hut of the compound. The materials are obtained by melting down pennies (for "copper"), rifle cartridges and rods (for brass), and silver coins. The main products are brass and copper sword-hilts, daggers, horse-trappings, bowls, jugs, trays, ladles, and receptacles; brass, aluminium, and silver bangles, rings, hair-pins, and chains; signet-rings are made by a crude *cire-perdue* method. Some work is designed specifically for European buyers. The work is largely individual, but there is a system of apprenticeship.³⁴

467 Weavers, known as *edelucúš*, are found in three guild sections in the three parts 286 of Bida town. Most of them are Nupeized Yoruba. The looms are of the narrow horizontal treadle type producing cloth in strips 5 ins. wide, and of a standard length, approximately 10 yds. They are set up in a row in a half-open shed in the courtyard. The thread is now mostly of European manufacture, native-ginned and dyed cotton being rarely used. Members of the same household occupy a common workshop, but the work is mainly individual (*bucá*). A broad upright loom is used

³¹ Nadel, 1942, pp. 257-9, 293-4, 299; *Time*, 1947.

³² Nadel, *op. cit.*, pp. 259-60.

³³ Nadel, *loc. cit.*; Hopkins, 1934.

³⁴ Nadel, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-74.

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286 by women mostly among the Bida upper classes.²² Their work is not organized in a guild.

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Beadworkers are known as *Iuntana* and their craft, a luxury industry, consists of the "refining" of crude beads bought from Hausa and Arab traders; it is carried out in the entrance-hut of the compound and is entirely individual. The majority of the workers are paid at piece-rates, one of them acting as contractor, and the chain of finished beads is traded by his wife. This industry is being extinguished by imports of European beads.²³

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Glass-makers (masaga) claim to have originated in Egypt. Members of the guild are Moslems. The head (*tura*) is elected by popular vote. They have the most strongly organized and conspicuously self-contained of the Nupe craft guilds and there is a regular system of apprenticeship. This craft is mainly concentrated in Bida town. Black glass (*bikini*) is made, but this is being largely replaced by coloured glass (*kwalaba*) obtained by melting down bottles which have been bought by women traders. The native glass is made in one workshop, while fabrication is completed in others. Glass-workers have their market in their own quarter. Their main products are brightly coloured beads and bangles. Unlike other craftsmen, glass-workers undertake no agricultural work. There is no *bucá* work, all work being *efakó* with small wages.²⁴

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Tailoring and embroidery are individual crafts and members of the same household may belong to different professions. Tailors, including machine tailors, sometimes visit surrounding villages on their market days to find work. Their main products are caps, plain and embroidered gowns, trousers, and saddle-cloths. Their embroidered gowns are famous all over Nigeria.

Straw-hat makers use a "shape" of clay or wood and the crown of the hat is sometimes partly covered with leather. This is considered a "lazy" occupation, but a few craftsmen who have been taught European designs are well-to-do.

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[285]

Mat-makers of certain villages, e.g., Kutigi, are famous, and make oval or square, multi-coloured grass mats. The Basa-Nge of Igala Division make baskets and mats.

[282]

Leather-workers formerly supplied a large part of the military equipment of the Nupe army—saddlery, leather shields, sword sheaths, quivers for arrows, etc. They work mainly in Bida town.²⁵

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Barber-doctors cut hair for men, women, and children; shave the head and cut the tribal marks of new-born babies at the naming ceremony and cut toe and finger nails. Individuals specialize in tattooing, medicines for diseases, contraceptives, cures for barrenness, treatment of lunacy, inhalants (*turare*), and minor operations such as circumcision and blood-letting. Hausa barbers remove the uvula of children.

Bida barbers, who are busy and prosperous, do not farm and their sons always become barbers, but this is not a "closed" craft. The length of apprenticeship varies. The most highly paid jobs are regarded by the family group as *efakó*, other jobs as *bucá*. There is a three-fold guild organization in Bida, corresponding to the territories of the three royal houses. Contributions from all *efakó* income are paid to the guild-head, who administers the guild fund, deducting money for common expenses and paying the rest in full to each member of the guild in turn.

There are also "*medicine-men*," whose craft is based on magical ideas and closely connected with divining and the Nupe religious system.²⁶

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Drummers and dancers, organized in mainly hereditary guilds, but with a system of apprenticeship, are found in all villages. Drumming may be recreational, for ceremony and ritual or ancillary to agricultural production (e.g., farming *egbe*). In

²² Ibid., pp. 276-82.

²³ Ibid., pp. 282-3.

²⁴ Nadel, op. cit., pp. 274-5; 1940b, pp. 83-6; Robertson, 1935.

²⁵ Nadel, 1942, pp. 286-90; Line, 1947; Hopkins, 1934.

²⁶ Nadel, op. cit., pp. 298-301, and see below, pp. 46-7.

467 the villages drumming is mainly a side-line to farming. Drummers in Bida form
533 small bands or companies, the origins of which, and the type of their performance,
535 vary. Both men and women perform and women sing. Members of a single group
may come from different families. There are no *cfakó* arrangements. Such a band
may be in a *šara* (client) relationship to a nobleman. The various bands or com-
panies do not co-operate. The drums are made by wood-workers on the river.²⁰

464 Western crafts are practised for wages in the workshops of the N.A. Public
Works Dept. These craftsmen include blacksmiths, mechanics, carpenters, and
bricklayers. Temporary unskilled labour is employed mainly in occasional work
demanding a large body of unskilled labour, such as construction work of various
kinds. Most of these labourers go home and return to their permanent work at the
end of their temporary employment. Those who are farmers seek temporary
employment during the dry season only, to supplement the normal source of
income.²¹

Women's crafts

323 Pottery is practised individually. Jebba Island, Baro, Badeggi, and Bida are
462 famous for their pottery and there is a regular trade in both potters' clay and pots.
The main products are small water jugs and large water containers. Clay is pre-
pared from swamps at Gbako River, at Badeggi, and sold by the villagers. It is
tempered with powdered potsherd or brick. The building of the pots is individual
work, but firing is undertaken collectively. Pots are simply fired, then given a brown
wash or blackened with a concoction of shea-nut bark.

1462 Shea-butter manufacture is carried out by women, but the roasting ovens are
[553] built by men.

[386] Indigo-dyeing is practised only by a few *Konú* groups, where the men are
weavers and the women dyers. The indigo-grass and the indigo-tree are cultivated
by men, but where the indigo is picked and prepared from wild growing grass, the
work is done by women. The dye-pot platforms are made by women; the dyeing
is carried out individually. There are a few groups of male dyers (e.g., in Mokwa),
who use a rather different technique from that employed by the women.

[286] Women's weaving is done on upright looms 21 ins. broad, which may be of
Yoruba origin. Among the *Basa-Nge*, older women weave patterned raffia.
Fishing-nets in Kede are made by old men and women from *rama* fibre.²²

411 Weapons and tools include spears, bows and poisoned arrows used by the more
remote groups, and knives with blades 8 to 10 ins. long. A few men use flint-locks,
and formerly a whole section of the Nupe army was equipped with guns.

501 Dug-out canoes are used by the *Bataci* as well as the *Kyedye*. Those of the
latter are large and square with caulked top strakes. They are mostly obtained
from Onitsha and the lower Benue.

534 Musical instruments include a central-hole flute (the blow-hole is midway
between the ends of the tube), pipes, clarinets (of Hausa origin), various drums and
[643] rattles, long bronze trumpets (forming part of the royal insignia), and, in some
areas, bull-roarers and animal horns.

532 Gabi figures are statues of different origins. Two bronze figures stand unpro-
718 tected in the centre of the village of Jebba Island near a dilapidated hut which is
said to have been formerly a temple. There are seven figures at Tada village which
are kept in a round hut and carefully tended; some of these are human figures and
some animal and they appear to be of diverse origins, but are regarded traditionally
as having been left by Tsoede on his flight up the Niger.²³

²⁰ Nadel, *op cit.*, pp. 301-3. For an outline of the *šara* system see below, p. 35.

²¹ Nadel, *op cit.*, pp. 304-5.

²² Nadel, *op cit.*, pp. 235, 293-7; Hopkins, 1934, Notes on Kede District, 1950.

²³ Temple, 1910, pp. 114, 117, 198, 322; Meek, 1925, vol. I, p. 106; Walker, 1934; see also Palmer, 1931.